



Keep Your Friends Close and Your Enemies Closer: Operational Design for a Nuclear-Armed Iran

United States Army Command and General Staff College

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The Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) has pursued a nuclear program since 1985. In February 2006 with the last round of international negotiations having failed and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) having reported the dossier to the United Nations Security Council, Tehran is on the precipice of being able to field a nuclear weapon at a time convenient to the IRI. A nuclear-armed Iran will change the strategic calculus in the Middle East and Central Asia and present new risks to US interests in the region. This monograph will address the issue of a nuclear-armed Iran from four perspectives; a historical pattern of Iranian behavior with respect to foreign influence, a Western perspective of these patterns, a technical review of Iran's nuclear program, and through a methodology called systemic operational design (SOD). A design that simultaneously pursues economic growth and regional stability through reopening of the US embassy in Iran while disrupting the foreign networks that support the proliferation of nuclear technology along with those that finance and support the foreign activities of Iran's IRGC and Hezbollah provides an initial frame and direction for action to manage the risks posed by a nuclear-armed Iran.

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